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AUTHOR	Gaspar, Richard F.
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ABSTRACT

This report outlines the program structures and faculty/staff roles of a developmental learning community (LC) initiative at Hillsborough Community College, Ybor Campus (Florida). The program consists of educational structures that link existing developmental courses and curriculum materials to a central theme: the importance of technology throughout American History and in today's society. The courses are designed to integrate technology applications with the teaching of college preparatory reading, writing, communication, keyboarding, and study skills. Researchers are evaluating the program's effect on: (1) student academic performance; (2) classroom attendance; (3) student retention; and (4) instructor/student and or student/student relations through the collection and analysis of student placement scores, pre-and post- test results, GPA, attendance, retention, and perception surveys. Initial observations of comparative data indicate that both LC and non-LC students demonstrated significant growth, based on Nelson Denny Reading Test (NDRT) pre- and post-exams. The data also show that non-LC students began the courses with higher Computerized Placement Test (CPT) reading scores and higher NDRT scores than LC students. Further, LC students demonstrated an equal level of growth from NDRT pretest to NDRT post-test, compared with the non-LC students, and LC students finished with a higher grade point average. (RC)

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Hillsborough Community College, Ybor Campus
Developmental Learning Community Program
2001-2002 Fall Summary

Submitted by

Richard F. Gaspar, Ph. D.

on behalf of the HCC Ybor Campus
Developmental Learning Community:

Professor Bonnie Ronson, LC Writing Instructor
Professor Richard F. Gaspar, LC Reading Instructor
Professor Rodney Hurley, LC Statistician
Ms. Janice Jeffers-Long, LC Advisor
Ms. Karen Anderson, LC Tutor

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Hillsborough Community College, Ybor Campus
Developmental Learning Community Program
2001-2002 Fall Summary

HCC Ybor City Campus Developmental Learning Community Model

The YCC LC is comprised of educational structures that link existing developmental courses together and restructure existing curriculum and materials to achieve an overarching theme. The YCC LC cluster of college preparatory classes focuses on the importance of technology throughout American history and in today's society. The currently available YCC LC courses are designed to integrate technology applications with the teaching of college preparatory reading, writing, communication, keyboarding, and study skills. This learning community cluster engages students in learning activities that share technological information and resources among all of the available courses.

Program Overview

The YCC LC has been offered for five non-consecutive terms and data has been collected for four non-consecutive semesters. The variables of (1) instructor/student ratio, (2) class scheduling, and (3) instructional delivery methods and assessment were manipulated within the YCC LC to determine their effect on (1) student academic performance, (2) classroom attendance (3) student retention, and (4) instructor/student and student/student relations. The effects are being analyzed by a collection of data consisting of student placement scores, student pre- and post- test results, GPA, attendance, retention, and perception surveys.

Program Result

The following information is abstracted from the LC faculty and staff summary statements for the HCC Fall 2001 semester. The summary was compiled by the LC Coordinator. A presentation by the LC Coordinator and the LC Statistician is scheduled for Tuesday, February 12, 2002 at 2:00 PM, in the Ybor Campus President's Conference Room.

LC Advisor's Report

During the fall, 2001 semester, the LC Advisor's efforts were focused on recruiting students for the Developmental Learning Community and providing on-going academic advising and encouragement throughout the semester. One specific goal was to identify 18 students to participate in the LC program. Each student who came in to register for classes was evaluated for eligibility in the program and, if qualified, invited to join the Developmental Learning Community. Once a student was determined to be a potential LC candidate, the student met with the LC Advisor who explained the potential benefits of the LC program.

Once the LC enrollment capacity was reached, the LC Advisor focused on making follow-up calls to the LC participants. These calls were made to see how the students were handling their course work, to answer any questions students might have, and to encourage students to use all the resources available in the LC program. During the spring semester, telephone contact with the LC students will be supplemented with one-to-one student/advisor meetings. This effort is the result of the difficulties in reaching some participants by telephone (several students did not have valid telephone numbers or their telephone lines were disconnected).

LC Writing Instructor's Report

During the fall, 2001 semester, the LC Writing Instructor focused on connecting the writing and reading classes through shared activities and projects. Students also were encouraged to revise projects for each class and to submit work that had a cross-curricular focus. Additionally, the assessment duties were shared among the LC faculty and staff; as a result, students received multiple forms of feedback including oral, written, and one-to-one conferences with the LC instructors and the LC Tutor.

During the spring semester, the LC Writing Instructor will involve students in written responses to a new LC community project with Desoto Elementary School. Likewise, the LC Writing Instructor will co-present a paper on the LC project at the National League for Innovation in Community Colleges in March 2002.

LC Reading Instructor's Report

During the fall, 2001 semester, the LC Reading Instructor also focused on connecting the writing and reading classes through shared activities and projects. Additionally, he developed a partnership with Dr. Manuel Duran, principal of Desoto Elementary School that enables LC participants to attend reading activities with their LC Instructors in elementary school classrooms. These reading activities will fortify reading skills for all of the participants and facilitate additional reading improvement for all of the students involved. The Ybor Kawanis Club will also be providing tutoring stipends for LC participants who attend the reading sessions.

Furthermore, the LC Reading Instructor submitted the abstract for the National League for Innovation in Community Colleges Conference and will be co-writing and co-presenting the results of the LC project in March 2002. The project will also be submitted for publication in Reading Research Quarterly when the spring 2002 statistics are completed and analyzed.

LC Tutor's Report

During the fall, 2001 semester, the LC Tutor met with each participant one-to-one to schedule tutoring sessions. The LC Tutor also assisted students will LC assignments and activities throughout the fall semester. The LC Tutor provided additional assistance to LC instructors and staff and was available to meet with students and staff at their convenience throughout the semester.

During the spring semester, the LC Tutor will be participating in the Desoto Elementary School project. She will also continue to provide one-to-one tutoring on a regular basis.

LC Coordinator's and Statistician's Report

During the fall, 2001 semester, the LC Coordinator and LC Statistician held several meetings to design a research model, generate research questions, and to collect and analyze data. The LC Coordinator provided data collection and the LC Statistician provided an extensive examination and interpretation of the data. The following research questions were examined from the fall 2001 data set:

LC DATA QUESTIONS

- ✓ Is there a relationship between the CPT Reading and the NDRT Pretest?
- ✓ Is there a relationship between CPT Reading and GPA?
- ✓ Is there a relationship between CPT Reading and Retention?
- ✓ Is there a relationship between NDRT Pretest and NDRT Posttest?
- ✓ Is there a relationship between NDRT Pretest and GPA?
- ✓ Is there a relationship between NDRT Pretest and Retention?
- ✓ Are CPT Reading scores a predictor of NDRT Pretest scores?
- ✓ Are CPT Reading scores or NDRT scores a predictor of GPA?
- ✓ Are CPT Reading scores or NDRT scores a predictor of Retention?
- ✓ Are NDRT Pretest scores a predictor of NDRT Posttest scores?

- ✓ Is there a significant difference between the LC students and non-LC students among the following variables:
  - ✓ CPT vs. CPT?
  - ✓ NDRT Pretest vs. NDRT Pretest?
  - ✓ NDRT Pretest to Posttest Growth vs. NDRT Pretest to Posttest Growth?
  - ✓ GPA vs. GPA?
  - ✓ Retention % vs. Retention %?

LC Data Results

An extensive analysis of the data was preformed, and the following information is a summary of the initial results. Additional advanced analyses will be conducted during the spring semester to further explore the research questions.

- ✓ There is a significant relationship between the CPT Reading scores and the NDRT Pretest scores.
- ✓ There is a significant relationship between the NDRT Pretest scores and NDRT Posttest scores.

Descriptive Statistics:

Variable:	Full Range:	LC Students Mean:	Non-LC Students Mean:
CPT Reading	20-120	51.84	54.64
NDRT Pretest	4.1-18.9	5.98	7.24
NDRT Posttest	4.1-18.9	8.53	10.06
NDRT Growth	0.0-14.8	2.55	2.82
GPA	0.0-4.0	3.27	1.64

Summary:

The initial observations of the data indicated that both LC and non-LC students demonstrated significant growth from NDRT Pretest to Posttest. Also, the data shows that the non-LC students began the courses with higher CPT Reading scores and higher NDRT scores than LC students. The data also suggests that the LC students demonstrated an equal level of growth from NDRT Pretest to NDRT Posttest vs. the Non-LC students and that they finished with a higher GPA than the non-LC students. Additional analyses will be conducted by the LC Statistician to verify these observations. A complete collection of the initial results will be presented at the February 12th meeting.

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